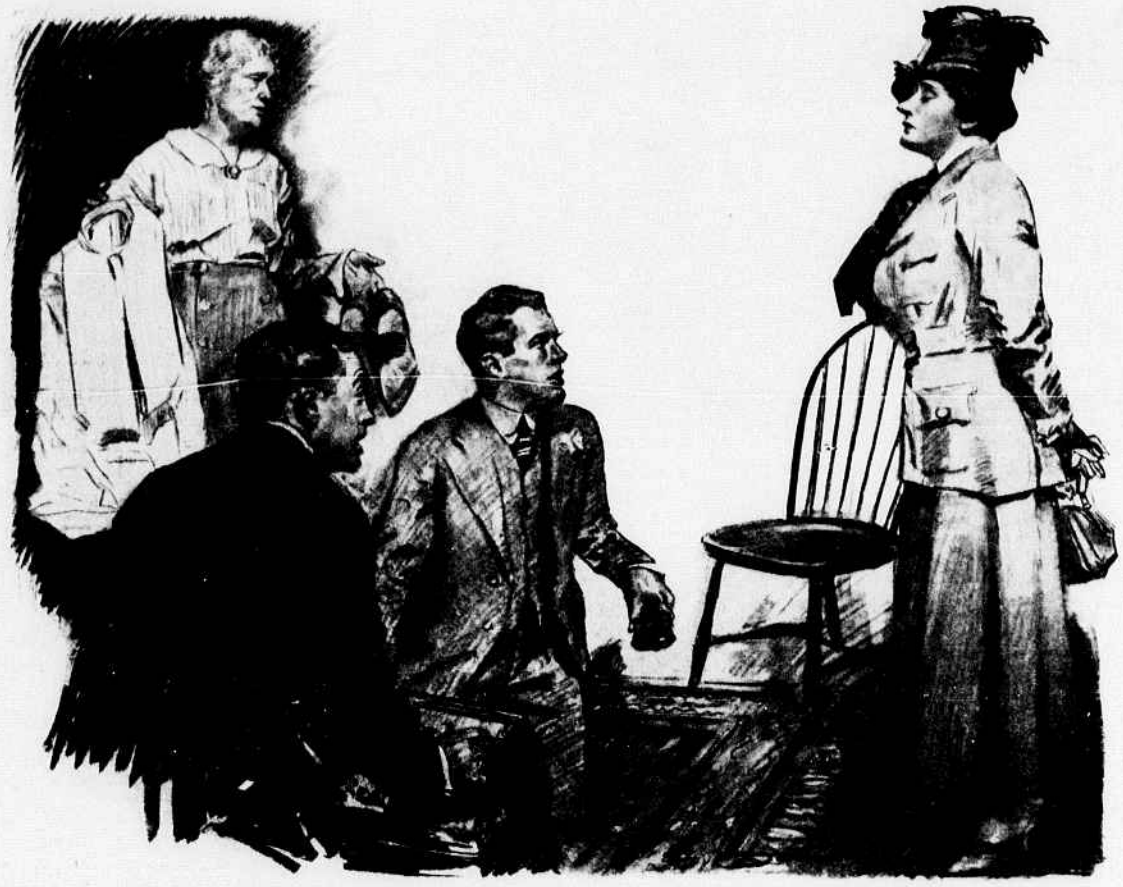

"'It's a case of his goin' his way and lettin' you go yours,' says I."

other. Oh, it's been something terrible! I can't stand it, that's all. And I'm going to clear out. I'm going now—forever."

"Naturally. Just what you should do," chimes in Aunt Linnie. "Don't endure it for another moment. That is, you might stay long enough to see that dinner has been ordered."

"Dinner will be served at seven, as usual," says Baxter, stiffenin'. "The servants know nothing of this, not a word. I'll simply take my bag and—"

"Who packed it, Baxter?" says she.

"Why, I did, of course," says he.

"Humph!" says she. "Sure you have everything you need until Marjorie sends your trunks? Your pajamas, evening clothes, studs for your dress-shirt—"

"By George!" says Baxter, openin' the kit-bag and pawin' through it panicky. "I—I believe I did forget those blamed studs, after all. I think Marje keeps them in her jewel-case."

"Better make a note of the studs," says Aunt Linnie. "Then, there are your shaving things—soap, mirror, strop—"

"Hang that razor-strop!" cuts in Baxter. "If I haven't left it on the hook in the bath-room!"

"One can't go away forever," says Aunt Linnie, rollin' her eyes tragic, "without one's razor-strop. Now, how about shoes?"

With my help, he'd just discovered that he'd packed two left pumps, when the front door opens sudden, and in blows the other half of this domestic sketch.

SHE's a plump, high-colored little party, Mrs. Baxter Price, got up snappy in a pongee golf suit with a half-masted skirt, green-and-white side-laced boots, and one of these freak lids that looks like a puddin'-mold explodin' through the top.

Her big, lively eyes opens a bit wider at sight of me and Baxter on our knees in the middle of the livin'-room rug, with the kit-bag between us, and Aunt Linnie holdin' a dress-shirt in one hand and a pair of shoes in the other.

"How interesting!" says she. "May I ask what this is all about?"

Aunt Linnie she just smiles and waves at Baxter. I expect I only gawps. As for Mr. Price, he tries to look cold and dignified, but it ain't much of a success. Maybe he'd done better if he was standin' up.

"Aunt Linnie, what is going on here?" demands Mrs. Price.

"My dear," says Auntie, "why not ask your husband?"

"Oh, Baxter!" says she. "It would take him a week to explain anything. Besides, he's grouchy about something or other. Mr. McCabe, you seem to be helping. Why the traveling-bag?"

"Tell her," says Baxter.

Nice job, wa'n't it? Like breakin' the news to a new-made widow. But I states the proposition as gentle as I could.

"It's a case of his goin' his way and lettin' you go yours," says I.

"Forever," adds Baxter solemn.

"Pooh!" says Mrs. Price. "Is that all? I was afraid some one had been taken ill."

"Marjorie," calls out Baxter, gettin' on his feet and glarin' at her, "don't you dare be frivolous at such a crisis. I tell you that I—"

"Big baby!" says Mrs. Price, pokin' her finger at him. "Now, I am going to tell Aunt Linnie and Mr. McCabe just what is the matter with you."

"Majorie!" he warns her.

"I will," says she, runnin' out her tongue. "It's all because I dozed off the other night while he was reading a lot of reviews of that book of poems he's got out."

"Poems!" echoes Aunt Linnie. "Does Baxter—"

"He does," says Mrs. Price. "He's been at it ever since he was a boy. I've tried to keep it quiet, but I'm not going to any longer. He is Rowland Rice."

"Really!" says Auntie. "Why, not the one who—"

"Uh-huh," says Marjorie. "Those sweet, slushy things, mostly in the women's magazines, fashion periodicals, and so on. That was bad enough. But when he paid three hundred dollars to have them published in a book,—a white-and-gold book,—and expected me to listen to them all over again, and those silly reviews as well—"

"Now, see here!" breaks in Baxter. "Don't I have to listen while you tell me all about your golf matches?"

"Why not?" says Mrs. Price. "That's different."

"Is it?" growls Baxter. "Remember, Aunt Linnie, I'm not a golfer—don't know one stick from another. But all through dinner, night after night, I must hear how she played each stroke; how she sliced into the rough off the first, got bunkered on third, holed out with a mashie approach on the twelfth, and laid her opponent a stymie that won the game on the home green. That sort of thing, by George!"

"But you never half listen," protests Marjorie.

"At least," comes back Mr. Price, "I don't go to sleep."

"As if I could help it that once," pouts Marjorie. "After I'd been thirty-six holes, too. Just think, Aunt Linnie—a whole batch of reviews at once!"

Aunt Linnie sighs and shakes her head.

"I'm afraid it's hopeless," says she. "But I don't know just what to advise. Of course, you might each bring suit and see which would win. I suppose either of you could claim cruel and unusual treatment. The courts here might grant a decree on those grounds, but I doubt it. It would be much simpler for one of you to go to some place like South Dakota. Now, if Baxter could leave his business long enough to—"

"He could not," says Mrs. Price, decided. "He has already had his vacation. We took a motor tour."

"Then you must go, Marjorie," says Aunt Linnie. "You might like it out there and—"

"I sha'n't go a step," announces Marjorie. "I'm not going to divorce Baxter. I think it's horrid, being divorced. It would get in the papers. And it—it would put me off my game, thinking about it. Besides, for all Baxter's such a silly, I—I've got used to having him around."

"But," says Aunt Linnie, "if you no longer love each other—"

"We do, though; we do!" protests Marjorie. "Don't we, Baxy dear?"

With that she makes a sudden rush at him, gives him the fond tackle around the belt, and snuggles her head against his vest, regardless of the puddin'-mold lid.

As for Baxter, after one sheepish glance at us, he folds her in tender.

"I guess we do, after all," says he.

"Gra-shus, not to say allemanastrous!" says Aunt Linnie, tippin' me the humorous wink. "In that case—"

"I beg pardon, ma'am," says a neat maid, edgin' in shy, "but dinner is served, ma'am."

"Thank goodness for that," says Marjorie, pattin' her hubby on the cheek. "I'm nearly starved. Come on, everybody! No, wait a minute. Just to show how good I'm going to be, Baxy— Here! Give me a match."

At which she produces a golf score, touches it off, and throws it into the fireplace.

Does that get Baxter? It does. This time it's him starts the clinch.

"I guess I can make a burnt offering too," says he.

And what he adds to the blaze is a bunch of them precious book reviews that he digs out of his bag. We forms a touchin' little group, I expect, as we stands round the grate.

"WELL," says I, breakin' the silence, "it ain't every fam'ly scrap you can end with a bonfire."

"Maybe more of them could be ended that way," says Aunt Linnie, "if folks could only get together and find out what to burn."

"We knew—eh, Marje?" says Baxter, waggin' his head cocky and leadin' wifey towards the soup.

But, say, I got a hunch that, spite of all her pretendin' she was no fixer, it was Aunt Linnie who really split the kindlin'.

Behind the Bolted Door?

Continued from page 10

again D. Hope was still crying, but with a sort of happiness.

Laneham asked his last question in the doorway:

"And you'd never suspected *that?*"

"No. Oh, I knew she was ambitious. I could feel that marriage hadn't satisfied her—"

"No."

"And that she wanted to lead some sort of bigger life. I felt at times that she'd begun. But—even then—I didn't suspect that it was that!"

"No; I suppose that no one could have." The Doctor himself was greatly moved. "Poor woman! Poor, dear woman!"

He turned to the Judge.

"And now, Bishy, I've had three contributions, and put them together. All that is lacking is the fourth."

"Laneham!" Bishop backed into the corner. "I—I—I—I give you my professional word!"

"Yes; and, in a way, so did all the rest of them. Come on."

They entered the other room together.

When they emerged ten minutes later one might have thought from the look on the judge's face that he had pronounced a death sentence.

"Well," he said, like a man in awe, "the devil himself is in this. But, at any rate, I know now why she sent for me. But I would never have believed it—never believed it!"

But Laneham had no time to waste on soliloquies.

"Bishy, old man," he interrupted, "do you remember what we were talking about on the afternoon of the murder?"

"Very well indeed. You were speaking of the various ways in which your modern psychologist's science ought to aid in the detection of crime."

"I was. And in many ways during this last week I've been putting my methods into practice. There is one thing I have still to try."

"And that is?"

"The possibilities, if you like, of trance and medium."

"Trance and medium?" Again the Judge could only repeat it.

"I am going to McGloyne in the morning to ask if to-morrow night he will let me hold, in Mrs. Fisher's rooms, and if possible midway between the rooms where the two murders took place, something that you could only call a spiritualist séance."

"I TOLD you, Inspector, that you'd say again that I'd lost my senses."

"But, hell, Doctor, hell! And what do you expect to get out of it?"

Laneham had found McGloyne in Mrs. Fisher's library, where Hooley had been